

Learning English with CBC Calgary

Weekly newscast

January 9th, 2015

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Objectives of the weekly newscast lesson

- to develop listening skills at the CLB 4 level
- to increase vocabulary among learners
- to increase knowledge of news stories
- to provide a self-study tool, as well as, an ESL classroom resource



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News story #1 Gun Violence in a Local Community

What drives one person to kill another? Do you think there would be fewer murders if people were not allowed to own guns? This first story is about the murders of two young people in Calgary.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the first news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Use one of the vocabulary words below to complete the sentences. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Word	Definition
family members	People who are part of the same family
grieve	To mourn and cry over the death of someone
violence	A lot of force and power used to injure/hurt someone
alley	The road that runs behind houses and stores in neighbourhoods
gang	A group of people who have the same interests, often committing crimes and acts of violence
gang unit	The department of the police in charge of gangs
investigation	A search looking for facts and details in a careful manner
suspect	Someone who is thought to have done something wrong

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

Somali community – people originally from Somalia who have formed a social group

Mosque – a place of prayer and worship for people of the Muslim faith.

1. The _____ with the police department is trying to find a _____ from a robbery that occurred in an _____ behind a grocery store earlier today. The person is thought to be part of a large _____ in the city and the group is known to use _____ against innocent people. This is an _____ that has been going on for months now.
2. _____ are _____ the loss of a 45 year old woman today, after she died in a terrible car accident on the highway last night.

Now listen to the first news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: True/False

Decide whether the statements below are **true (T)** or **false (F)**. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. _____ Only family members gathered at the mosque to grieve for the two men.
2. _____ Both the bodies of the two people who were killed were found on January 2nd.
3. _____ The Somali community wants to start a discussion about gun violence.
4. _____ The 23 year old was found in an alley.
5. _____ The 27 year old was murdered at a party.
6. _____ The suspects are from Edmonton and Calgary.
7. _____ The gang unit from Toronto is investigating these murders.

Discussion: Why do you think the Toronto police department is involved in these investigations? What can police do to try to stop these types of murders from taking place? Is there ever a need for regular people to own a gun in society? How would the world be different if there were no guns?

News story #2 Property Values at an All-Time High

Do you own a home? How much are your taxes for it every year? Why has the price of houses and property continued to rise over the years? This second story is about the housing market and property taxes in Calgary.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the second news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Match the words with the correct definitions. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Words or phrases	Answers	Definition
1. property values		a) average price
2. annual		b) to apply for a review of a case to a higher court
3. assessment		c) the worth of a person's land or home
4. median-priced		d) the highest something has even been has reached or been
5. appeal (n)		e) giving the official value of someone's property for tax or sales purposes
6. appeal (v)		f) yearly; every year
7. record high		g) an application or proceeding for a review of a case in a higher court

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

property tax – the amount of money people pay the government for owning a piece of land

Now listen to the second news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Matching

Match the columns according to how the subject affects the object. *Answers are in the appendix.*

Subject of statement	Matching letter (a,b,c,d,e)	Object of statement
1. Property values reached		a) the average price of houses was worth \$475,000
2. The city's annual property reassessment shows		b) only 38,000 people filed an appeal
3. The City sent		c) because they didn't agree with the value chosen by the City
4. Nelson Karpa says		d) a record high last year
5. 38,000 people filed an appeal		e) property tax bills in the spring
6. The City will mail out		f) the assessment notices today

Compare and Contrast (Discussion): What are the benefits and drawbacks of owning a home? What are the benefits and drawbacks of renting a home? Compare and contrast owning a home versus renting a home. Which do you think is best?

News story #3 More Safety for Bus Drivers

What types of jobs do you think of as being dangerous? Have you ever thought that being a bus driver is a dangerous job? This next story is about how driving a city bus is not as safe as we might think and the story talks about what is being done to keep drivers safer now.

Vocabulary

Before you listen to the third news story, complete this vocabulary activity. It will help you to understand the listening more easily. Match the words in the story with the synonyms.

Answers are in the appendix.

Answer	Words in the story	Synonyms (Related words)
	protection	a) drop empty
	route	b) block cut off
	assault	c) path; road way
	swear at	d) care safety
	dump	e) speak profanely to curse at; cuss at
	patrol	e) attack physically or verbally hurt
	impeding	f) guard protect

Extra definitions to help you understand the reading:

defuse a confrontation– to calm down a serious situation and get people to relax

reason with – to get someone to act in a certain way by talking to them

Now listen to the third news story from the audio file.

Listening Activity: Short Answer

Answer the questions below as you listen to the audio. *Answers are in the appendix.*

1. What types of assaults have bus drivers experienced while at work?
2. What kind of protection are the city bus drivers going to get now?
3. How many drivers report being assaulted each year?
4. Will drivers be able to reason with everyone after they are done their training?
5. What will happen to the 70 people who have assaulted bus drivers?
6. How much money will people have to pay if they are caught impeding transit services in the City?

Activity: Retell the story you just heard with your partner.

Language Focus: Simple past - identification and pronunciation

The simple past is used to talk about a completed action in a time before now. There are three ways to pronounce the –ed ending of regular past tense verbs. The final –ed will either sound like –d, –t, or –id. See the rules below:

-t	-d	-id (add an extra syllable)
If the verb ends with a voiceless sound – e.g. Watch ed Wash ed Like d Shopp ed Stuff ed Etc.	If the verb ends with a voiced sound – e.g. Clean ed Call ed Play ed Shav ed Colour ed Etc.	If the verb ends with a t or d – e.g. paint ed plant ed dread ed Etc.

Listen to the audio at the specified sections from the news stories this week and change the correct verb to past tense. Then decide what the pronunciation of the verb is (–d, –t, or –id). Some of the verbs are irregular and do not follow this pronunciation rule. If it is irregular, mark it that way.

Story 1

0:09

1. Family members and others in Calgary's Somali community gather at the Abu Bakr mosque to grieve the loss of two young people.

0:38

2. Police say people from Edmonton and Toronto are at the New Year's party.

Story 2

0:54

3. Property values in Calgary reach record highs last year.

0:58

4. The City's annual property reassessment shows the median-priced Calgary house is worth 475-thousand dollars last July First.

1:09

5. The City sends the property and business assessment notices in the mail today.

1:20

6. City assessor Nelson Karpa says last year, only 38-hundred people file an appeal because they do not agree with the value chosen by the City.

Transcripts of Weekly news stories

	JANUARY 9 TH WEEKLY NEWS STORIES	TIME
Introduction	Hi, and happy new year, I'm Rosa Marchitelli . You're listening to Learning English with CBC for the week of January 9, 2015.	0:00
Story 1	<p>1) Family members and others in Calgary's Somali community gathered at the Abu Bakr mosque to grieve the loss of two young people. They say they also want to talk about what to do about guns and violence in their community.</p> <p>A 23-year-old was found dead in a Rosedale alley on January second. A 27-year-old man was shot and killed at a house party in the southwest on New Year's Day. Police say people from Edmonton and Toronto were at the New Year's party, and the Toronto police guns and gangs unit is helping in the investigation. There are no suspects in either investigation.</p>	0:09
Story 2	<p>2) Property values in Calgary reached record highs last year. The City's annual property reassessment shows the median-priced Calgary house was worth 475 thousand dollars last July first. The City sent the property and business assessment notices in the mail today, which begins the 60-day period Calgarians have to appeal their assessment.</p> <p>City assessor, Nelson Karpa, says last year, only 38-hundred people filed an appeal because they didn't agree with the value chosen by the City. Karpa says based on the reassessment numbers, 95 per cent of Calgary properties will see their taxes go up or down less than 10 per cent. The City will mail out property tax bills in the spring after the provincial government sets the education tax.</p>	0:52
Story 3	<p>3) Calgary city bus drivers are now getting a little more protection on their routes. Every year, about 70 drivers report being assaulted, everything from being sworn at to someone dumping a drink on them to an actual physical attack.</p> <p>Now, nine peace officers will patrol problem bus routes at night. Rick Ratcliff is with the Amalgamated Transit Union. He says drivers already get training in how to defuse a confrontation, but he says they can't reason with everyone. Ratcliff says criminal charges in most of these cases are unlikely. But there is a city bylaw that includes a five-thousand dollar fine for impeding transit service.</p>	1:51

Answer keys

News story 1

Vocabulary:

1. The **gang unit** with the police department is trying to find a **suspect** from a robbery that occurred in an **alley** behind a grocery store earlier today. The person is thought to be part of a large **gang** in the city and the group is known to use **violence** against innocent people. This is an **investigation** that has been going on for months now.
2. **Family members** are **grieving** the loss of a 45-year old woman today, after she died in a terrible car accident on the highway last night.

Listening:

1. F Only family members gathered at the mosque to grieve for the two men.
2. F Both the bodies of the two people who were killed were found on January 2nd.
3. T The Somali community wants to start a discussion about gun violence.
4. T The 23 year old was found in an alley.
5. T The 27 year old was murdered at a party.
6. F The suspects are from Edmonton and Calgary.
7. T The gang unit from Toronto is investigating these murders.

News story 2

Vocabulary:

Words or phrases	Answers	Definition
1. property values	c	a) average price
2. annual	f	b) to apply for a review of a case to a higher court
3. assessment	e	c) the worth of a person's land or home
4. median-priced	a	d) the highest something has even been has reached, or been
5. appeal (n)	g	e) giving the official value of someone's property for tax, or sales purposes
6. appeal (v)	b	f) yearly; every year
7. record high	d	g) an application or proceeding for a review of a case in a higher court

Listening:

Subject of statement	Matching letter (a,b,c,d,e)	Object of statement
1. Property values reached	d	a) the average price of houses was worth \$475,000
2. The city's annual property reassessment shows	a	b) only 38,000 people filed an appeal

3. The City sent	f	c) because they didn't agree with the value chosen by the City
4. Nelson Karpa says	b	d) a record high last year
5. 38,000 people filed an appeal	c	e) property tax bills in the spring
6. The City will mail out	e	f) the assessment notices today

News story 3

Vocabulary:

Answer	Words in the story	Synonyms (Related words)
d	protection	a) drop empty
c	route	b) block cut off
f	assault	c) path; road way
e	swear at	d) care safety
a	dump	e) speak profanely to curse at; cuss at
g	patrol	f) attack physically or verbally hurt
b	impeding	g) guard protect

Listening:

- What types of assaults have bus drivers experienced while at work?
Everything from being sworn at to someone dumping a drink on them to an actual physical attack.
- What kind of protection are the city bus drivers going to get now? Nine peace officers will patrol problem bus routes at night and drivers are getting training in how to defuse a confrontation.
- How many drivers report being assaulted each year? About 70

4. Will drivers be able to reason with everyone after they are done their training? **No, not everyone**
5. What will happen to the 70 people who have assaulted bus drivers? **It is unlikely that criminal charges will be laid.**
6. How much money will people have to pay if they are caught impeding transit services in the City? **\$5,000**

Language focus:

1. Family members and others in Calgary's Somali community **gathered (-d)** at the Abu Bakr mosque to grieve the loss of two young people.
2. Police say people from Edmonton and Toronto **were (irregular)** at the New Year's party.
3. Property values in Calgary **reached (-t)** record highs last year.
4. The City's annual property reassessment shows the median-priced Calgary house **was (irregular)** worth 475-thousand dollars last July First.
5. The City **sent (irregular)** the property and business assessment notices in the mail today.
6. City assessor Nelson Karpa says last year, only 38-hundred people **filed (-d)** an appeal because they **didn't (irregular)** agree with the value chosen by the City.